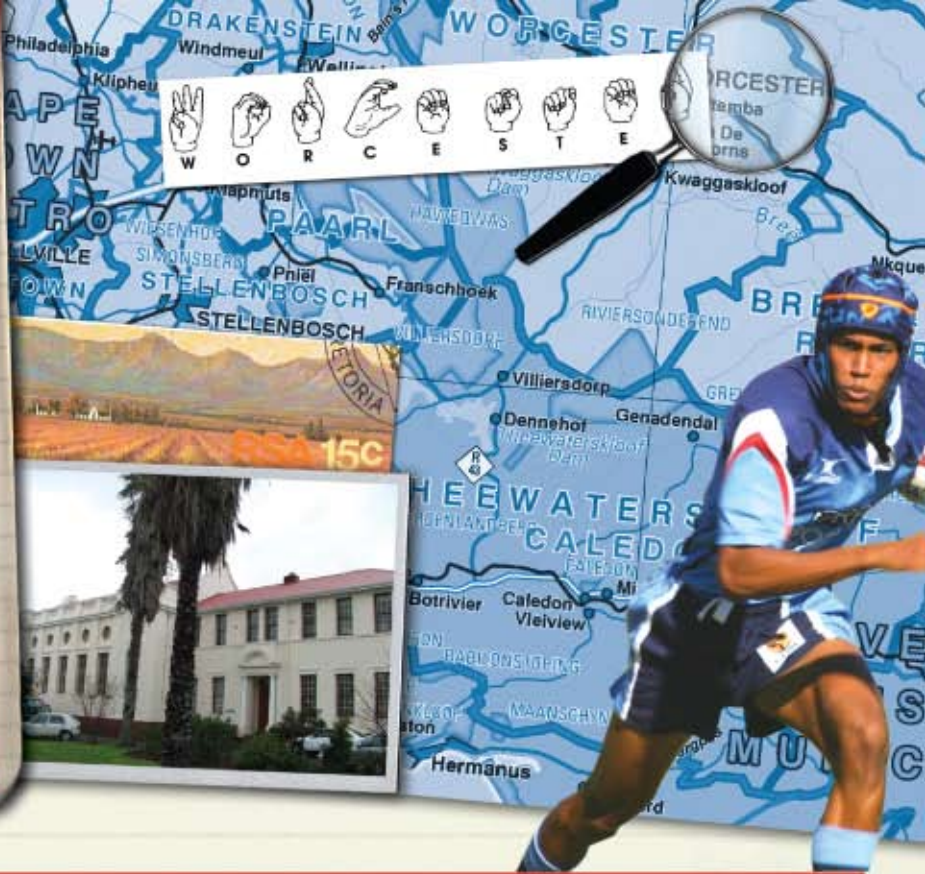


# WORCESTER

Worcester is on the fringe of the Karoo, enjoying the drier climate of the Karoo but with the benefits of the Western Cape in scenery and farming activity. You can ski above it and grow vines next to it. It is in the biggest wine-producing district in the country with 24 co-operative and three private wine cellars on the Worcester Wine Route, as well as two brandy cellars. There is vegetation that is semi-desert and then there are proteas and ericas and the wonders of fynbos. There are streams with trout and rivers for canoes. There are the hot springs of the Geusini Spa.

Worcester is a wonderful place. It took its name from Lord Charles Somerset's brother, the Marquis of Worcester, when it was founded in 1820.

It is a commercial and educational centre, including famous schools for the blind and the deaf.



# Worcester Gymnasium

## School History

Licenses had been granted to farmers to graze their cattle in the Breede River Valley before 1700. By 1709, there were farms between the Breede River and the Romans River. The first plots of land for town settlement in the Worcester magisterial district were sold by public auction in February 1820. After the first ten years there were several private schools in the town and surrounding area. The Undenominational Boys' Public School, which preceded the Boys' High School, started in July 1873 with 78 boys, and the Girls' High School, which started in January 1876 with 16 girls, later became two of the better known schools in the Cape Province. The two schools amalgamated in January 1972 and Worcester High School was founded on the site of the Boys' High School. The Old Hall and the north-eastern wing of the Boys' School were kept for use by the new school. The buildings of the Girls' High School currently house the Hugo Naudé Art School and the schoolclinic. Another product of the amalgamation was Montana High School, situated to the north of the town. A branch of the Cape Technical College was started in Worcester in 1941. The school building (currently part of the campus of the Worcester



FOUNDED: 1992  
MOTTO: DILIGENTIA  
(PERSEVERANCE)  
ADDRESS: TULBAGH STREET,  
WORCESTER  
WWW.WORCGIM.CO.ZA



Community College) and one hostel were opened in 1942. In January 1965 the name of the college was changed to Worcester Commercial High School because the training of apprentices had been assigned to the Drostyd Technical High School. By April 1968 the school was taken over by the then Cape Education Department and in 1988 the name changed to Worcester East High School. Worcester Gymnasium was founded in 1992 after the amalgamation of Worcester High School and Worcester East High School, though both schools had long histories. Worcester Gymnasium thus has its roots in as many as four schools — Boys' High, Girls' High, Worcester High and Worcester East. Dr H van der Westhuizen is the current principal.



*"There are so many differences between school rugby and professional rugby. When I played First XV rugby for Worcester Gymnasium, the focus was probably more on having fun and enjoying the game with your mates, although the higher you climbed in the rankings, the more pressure it created. School was where many of my best friendships today were established, and where 'small' things like self-discipline was learnt. War-cries, and my school coaches, Arthur Jansen and Marius van der Bank, are all good memories from my school days."*

**— JP Nel**



## Rugby at Worcester

Worcester Gymnasium has nine rugby sides and has consistently proven itself as one of the Boland's strongest rugby schools. In 2005 it won its division in the Media24 competition, a competition that tends to draw many of the "heavyweights" in schools rugby. Since 1964, the school has produced 136 Craven Week players. Its national representatives include eight SA Schools players, as well as five SA Under-19 and three SA Under-21 Old Boys. Those who have received Springbok caps (before the 1992 amalgamation) include Percy Allport (1910), Buks Marais (1949), Bertus van der Merwe (1955), and Johan Oosthuizen (1974). Shandre Frolick has recently played for the impressive South African Sevens side.

The 2007 Rugby World Cup was not without a Worcester Gymnasium representative either, although DTH van der Merwe wore the Canadian Cardinal-and-Black and not the Bok Green-and-Gold. Although cricketers Claude Henderson and Con de Lange, and athlete Dicky Broberg, all played First XV rugby at Worcester Gym, Blue Bulls centre JP Nel is the school's most celebrated rugby Old Boy in recent years. Dewey Swartbooi, Aswell Peterson and Whalied Heyns are currently contracted to Boland.

The big derby of the year is against HTS Drostyd. The beginnings of the Worcester derby go back to 1920, and although the odds are stacked against Gymnasium (Drostyd have more rugby players and depth), the derby is always a tight and competitive fixture.

### Internationals

**South Africa:**  
Percy Allport, Buks Marais,  
Bertus van der Merwe  
Johan Oosthuizen

**Canada:**  
DTH van der Merwe

